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Testimony presented to the Public Safety and Security Committee

IN OPPOSITION TO Raised S.B. No. 1076 AN ACT CONCERNING THE REDUCTION OF GUN VIOLENCE..

by Robert T. Crook, Director

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The contents of this bill are with a few exceptions totally unnecessary and overreaching in relation to the Sandy Hook incident. **No gun law failed.** The cause is the criminal and probably his mother not storing firearms properly allowing access to a known "problem son". The question to be asked is will any of the many bills here today solve that problem or will the Legislature enact egregious new restrictive gun laws only affecting the hundreds of thousands of law abiding citizens. **This bill and many others are merely political attempts to pass laws that have previously failed.** All these proposal center on a constant we've seen for years from antigun groups: Focus on the device not the doer; on the citizen not the criminal. We'd urge you to use common sense and evaluate closely the unintended consequences should this bill and others pass.

Eliminate the misnamed "Assault Weapon" bill. The bill has had virtually no effect on crime where passed in a few states. It has done nothing to reduce crime in CT except impact the citizenry, even though it passed twice, and the US Dept of Justice has stated it solved virtually nothing. **By focusing on cosmetic features,** gun opponents make specious points about "weapons of war" – NO army in the world uses semi-auto firearms - rather than focusing on the actual causes of crime. How many criminals have been arrested/convicted? How many citizens have been arrested (Class D felony) for not having a certificate of possession that didn't know the law? The latter outweighs the former. (See attachment).

AW Self Defense/Police Exemption? The *only* difference between a police officer and a private citizen is that the former has the authority and duty to intervene in situations that the ordinary citizen should, or even must, avoid. If either needs a firearm for any non-sporting purpose, though, he or she needs it for exactly the same reason. The definition of a weapon that is "reasonable" for legitimate self-defense is therefore, "Any weapon that is routinely available to law enforcement agencies." William A. Levinson, P.E. --

Magazine Capacity: "In the wake of these kind of incidents, the trick is to move quickly," said Kristen Rand, legislative director of the Violence Policy Center, one of the national gun control groups. If you are an anti-gun lawmaker, the goal is to ALWAYS move quickly, before any issue can be fully researched, debated or the public informed. As Rahm Emmanuel said, "Never let a good crisis go to waste." **The issue is not new.** The Federal Assault Weapons Ban, which was effective from 1994-2004, defined high capacity magazines as holding more than 10 rounds if removable, and 5 rounds if fixed. The law, including magazine provisions, was repealed as ineffective. CT defeated the magazine bill in 2011. **Where is ANY data that this proposal has reduced crime or gun violence? Or why is there not any other state standard for High Capacity magazines? Reason-** Most are feel good, knee-jerk legislation which does not impact criminal activity. (See attachment).

Eliminates the exemption to a long gun 2 week waiting period at retail for holders of a valid hunting license. We have always promoted credentials for firearms purchase. The 16 hour DEEP Hunter Safety Course teaches long gun safety and there is no documentation of hunters causing crimes with long guns. Additionally, all must go through an Instant Check.

1 Long Gun a Month: Why? Another resurrection of a failed CT bill. Absolutely NO relevance to crime only citizen control. Affects all citizens' freedom of purchase, particularly collectors.

State Rifle Permit: Ridiculous. This issue identically copies the process for pistol permits including fees (\$209) for National Criminal History, fingerprints (State & Federal), Local fee & State fee. The section allows appeal to the State Board of Firearms Permit Examiners currently 13 months behind on pistol appeals. As with the pistol system, it will clearly price out low income persons. Additionally it will impact DEEP recruitment of new hunters. Consider potential compliance.

Instant Check: We can **SUPPORT** corrections to the NICS system (Sec 13(a)). It is currently **voluntary** for individuals conducting Casual Sales (**not retail**) to request a check by telephone on the purchaser. Making Instant Check a requirement for ALL sales will improve the system. Gun owners support this concept.

Ammunition: (Sec 23) **OPPOSE.** Requires an identification card for purchasing ammunition for a specific firearm. More bureaucratic imposition to what end?

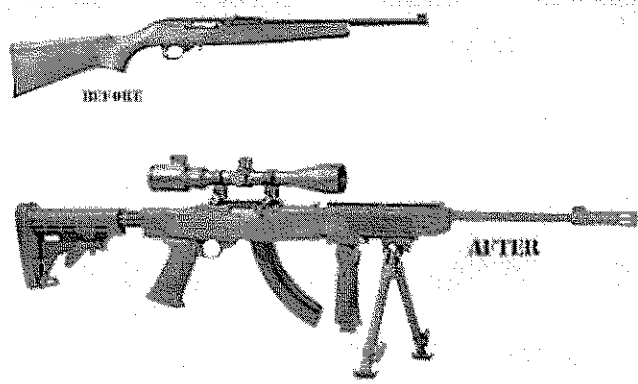
Registration: (Sec. 35) **OPPOSE.** Mandatory for each Firearm. **Outrageous!** DeFacto Registration has been in effect long before my lobbying of 33 years on all retail sales. The data criteria to be met cannot be accomplished on many of the guns acquired at gun shows through out-of-state FFL holders; guns acquired through wills, gifts, casual purchase, etc. Thumbprint, why? Photographs, why? A waiver of Confidentiality? Renewal after one year? A Registration Card for each gun when some collectors may have thousands and most gun owners have several. The registration card must be carried with the gun? Decision making by State Police? In July 2014 the Dept. may charge a fee for administrative costs? Appeal not to the Firearms Board but the Superior Court! There are undoubtedly well over 1 million guns owned in the state. Expiration after one year! **Will the State Police sworn to "Protect and Serve" the public become the DMV or Dept of Gun Registration?** An obvious waste of Police assets when they should be arresting criminals! More bureaucratic imposition to what end? The last question to be considered will the citizenry comply with this outrageous proposal? Or, will we fill the jails with administrative felons?

Thank you.

Liberal Argument: *Some guns are more dangerous-looking and, therefore, should be banned.*

Take a look at the picture below. One of the guns is one of the — if not *the* — most commonly owned rifles in North America: the Ruger 10-22. It's a redoubtable and recognizable weapon, chambered in the easy-to-handle .22 rimfire. It features a no-frills wood stock and a detachable 10-round rotary magazine, and it looks about as frightening as a BB gun. The other depicts a sinister-looking death machine. Outfitted in black polymer, it features a pistol grip and a folding and collapsible buttstock, and it is normally shipped with a 25-round magazine. One looks like an amped-up version of a Daisy air rifle. The other looks like something that would make Morgan lose control of his bladder. The thing is: They're the same rifle. Sure, one looks awfully "tactical," but it's really just "tacti-cool." They fire the same .22 rimfire round. The magazines that work in one work just as well in the other. And neither would be a particularly good choice as a primary self-defense

weapon. By focusing on cosmetic features on this gun and other ARs, the gun as with ALL semi-auto rifles function the same.



CONGRESS - U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) on Wednesday urged senators to pass an assault weapons ban that she says would help prevent mass shootings like the one in Newtown, Conn. Feinstein introduced legislation to ban the sale and manufacture of more than 150 types of semi-automatic weapons with military-style features. The legislation also bans magazines holding more than 10 rounds of ammunition and requires people who already own assault rifles to use secure storage and safety devices and bars them from selling high-capacity clips.

Meanwhile, Grant Duwe, a criminologist with the Minnesota Department of Corrections, said that while mass shootings rose between the 1960s and the 1990s, they actually dropped in the 2000s. And mass killings actually reached their peak in 1929, according to his data. He estimates that there were 32 in the 1980s, 42 in the 1990s and 26 in the first decade of the century.

Chances of being killed in a mass shooting, he says, are probably no greater than being struck by lightning. Feinstein has argued that banning so-called "assault weapons" would help decrease mass shootings. But a study by the University of Pennsylvania concluded that the old assault weapons ban was undermined because it is difficult to define what an "assault weapon" actually is and there were already so many in circulation. The study also concluded that the law appeared to have little effect on gun violence overall, most likely because rifles are used in a small percentage of gun crimes.

Consider this, hands and feet, knives, shotguns, and handguns all killed more people than rifles in 2010. According to FBI data, 358 people were killed by rifles that year, half that of people who were killed by "hands and feet."

According to the FBI's most recent Uniform Crime Report, a summary of all serious crimes committed each year, in 1992 violent crime incidence was 752 per 100,000 people and 9.3 murders per 100,000. In 2011, the violent crime rate had dropped to 386 per 100,000 and the murder rate to 4.7 per 100,000 -- nearly a *50 percent decline* in both. This precipitous drop occurred at a time when the number of firearms increased dramatically -- including the sale of more than six million "assault weapons." So, why all the political focus on "assault weapons"?

The 2011 FBI data shows that there were 323 murders committed with rifles of any kind. However, guns defined as "assault weapons" by the federal government were used in less than 0.5% (one-half of one percent) of all murders with guns in 2011.

By comparison, 496 murders were committed with hammers and clubs, and 1,694 murders were perpetrated with knives. Notably, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reports that drunk drivers are responsible for nearly 10,000 deaths each year in the U.S. -- far more than the number of deaths involving guns of any kind in 2011. (Should there be federal background checks every time someone orders a beer or glass of Chardonnay?)

Additionally, according to the demographic and geographic profile of most violent crimes, the vast majority of perpetrators who murder with guns are associated with gangs and/or drug cartels, which thrive in urban areas